

REMARKS

The Applicant requests entry of the above Amendments, and consideration of the application, as amended.

Some of the Amendments to the claims above reflect a phone conversation between Examiner Cheryl Juska and Applicant's undersigned Agent held on February 3, 2004. In that conversation, Examiner Juska agreed with the Applicant's Agent that the prior art does not teach or suggest the use of a "legend" to provide at least some information about the image on the claimed floor covering, article of manufacture, etc. As discussed in the phone conversation, support for the "legend" appears in the passage in lines 1 through 7 on page 2 of the Specification. By the above amendment, claims 1, 10, 15, 26, 37, and 45 were amended accordingly to recite a "legend" in some form.

By the above Amendment, the Applicant also amended claim 20 to overcome a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. In the above-referenced phone conference, Examiner Juska agreed that this amendment to claim 20 overcame this rejection.

The Applicant also amended claims 19, 30, 31, 43, and 54-56 to overcome objections to these claims as being dependent upon rejected claims. Claims 19, 30, 31, 43, and 54-56 have been redrafted in independent form and include all the limitations of their base claims.

The Applicant also introduced new claims 70-98. Claims 70-74 recite limitations to their respective base claims in which the material can be "one of a textile material and a non-textile material". Support for these aspects of the invention appears throughout the Specification. Claims 75-98 introduce limitations to independent claims 54-56 which recite "a pocket". Support for these aspects of the invention appear in paragraphs 0045 through 0049 and in Figures 13-15.

In making the above amendments, the Applicant in no way acquiesces to the rejections made by the Patent Office in the Office Action. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue protection of the broader invention recited in the as-filed claims through one or more divisional or continuation applications, as appropriate, at a later time. The Applicant submits that no new matter was introduced to the claims by the above amendments.

Claims 1-23 and 26 -98 are now pending in this application. Claims 24 and 25 were cancelled previously.

Response to Comments in Office Action

Rejections §112 Rejections due to Indefiniteness

In paragraphs 3-5 on page 2 of the Action, the Patent Office rejected claims 20-23 and 52 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Applicant believes that the above amendments overcome these rejections.

Rejections §103 Rejections due to Obviousness

In paragraphs 6 and 7 on page 3 of the Action, the Patent Office rejected claims 1-18, 26-29, 33-42, 45-51 and 53 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of U.S. Patent 5,461,748 of Koiduka [herein "Koiduka"]. However, the Applicant believes that these rejections are overcome by the above Amendment. As noted above, the Applicant believes that the above Amendments comply with the amendments discussed with Examiner Juska in the above-referenced phone conversation. Examiner Juska deemed claims amended as such allowable.

Allowable Subject Matter

In paragraphs 12 through 17 on pages 4 and 5 of the Action, the Patent Office acknowledges the allowability of the subject matter of claims 19, 30, 31, 32, 43, 44, and 54-56, if written in independent form; the allowability of the subject matter of claims 21-23 and 52, if rewritten to overcome a rejection under 35 USC 112; and the allowance of claims 57-69. The Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Patent Office's recognition of the allowability of this subject matter.

As noted above, the Applicant has redrafted claims 19, 30, 31, 43, and 54-56 in independent form to include all the limitations of their base claims to overcome the objections to these allowable claims. As also noted above, claim 20 has been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112. New claims 75-98 are

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Reply to Office action of January 7, 2004

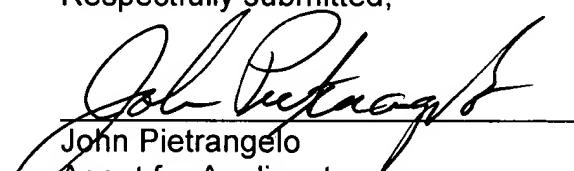
dependent upon allowable claims 54-56. Thus, the Applicant believes that claims 19, 30-32, 43, 44, 54-98 are allowable.

Conclusion

The Applicant believes that the application is in allowable form. Early passage of the subject application to issue is earnestly solicited. Should any matters remain outstanding, it is requested that the undersigned Agent be given a call so that such matters may be worked out and the application placed in condition for allowance without the necessity of another Action.

The Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the thoroughness of the recent Office Action drafted by Examiner Juska, and also acknowledges with gratitude Examiner Juska's assistance in advancing this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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